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ABSTRACT

Six university libraries were visited and observations were made on their procedures for indicating locations of reference books in card catalogs. Comparisons were made between other libraries and Wayne State University Libraries in the following areas: (1) the decision to classify books as reference; (2) the labeling of reference books; (3) the reference catalog; and (4) ways of indicating reference locations on catalog cards. Recommendations for the Wayne State system were made. (EMH)

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UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

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TECHNICAL PAPER NO. 8

FEASIBILITY OF INDICATING THE LOCATION OF REFERENCE MATERIALS IN THE CARD CATALOG IN THE WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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by

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Detroit
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Introduction

In July and August of 1975, I visited six large university libraries to examine the policies and procedures they used to indicate Reference locations. In the fall of 1975, I compiled and evaluated the data that I had gathered, comparing it to Wayne's current policies and procedures. This report will describe the libraries that I visited, outline their policies and procedures for indicating Reference locations, compare them to Wayne's library system, and conclude with my recommendations for Wayne.

A. Description of Libraries visited

1. Other University libraries

The six university libraries that I visited were, in order,

1. University of Toledo
2. Ohio State University
3. Indiana University
4. Purdue University
5. University of Michigan
6. Michigan State University

The University of Toledo library collections include more than a million volumes. They have used OCLC for cataloging for several years. They have only one branch library--the Comtech library.

The Ohio State University Library system, which includes the Main Library and over twenty departmental libraries, is among the largest in the country. It contains more than 2.7 million volumes. They have also been cataloging via OCLC for several years.

The Indiana University Libraries contain more than 2.5 million cataloged volumes in their main, departmental, and other campus libraries. They have over fifteen departmental library locations and were just profiling their cataloging system prior to OCLC hook-up when I visited.

The Purdue University Libraries house over a million volumes in the General and twenty-eight departmental libraries. As other Indiana libraries, Purdue was in the midst of profiling for OCLC last summer.

The University of Michigan Library system, which includes the General Library and about thirty divisional libraries, contains more than 3.5 million volumes. They were awaiting final training to begin producing cards with the OCLC system last summer.

The Michigan State University Libraries, with a Main Library and about thirty departmental collections, house over 1.9 million volumes. They, too, were readying to be "brought up" on the OCLC cataloging system.

B. Policies for Indicating Reference Locations

1. Other libraries

All the libraries I visited indicated the location of Reference materials in their card catalogs. All thought such location information was very important to their patrons and staff and should be provided right in the catalog rather than in a separate listing. The General Reference Collection, that is, the reference collection in the Main or General Library, was the only one whose contents were so listed in the Union Catalogs. This location "Reference" was treated similarly to other departmental or divisional locations with the exception of serials, which were handled differently from monographs for the Reference location. "Added locations" included Reference and were listed on or at the union main entry card, thus enabling titles to be located in both Reference and the circulating or other departmental library collections.

The Reference collections of the departmental libraries were not listed as such in the union catalog; the location given for them there was their departmental library only. Concern was expressed that patrons would confuse one Reference collection with another at the union catalog if they all were listed there. Each departmental library then indicated its own Reference locations according to its own choice in its own catalog. The general policy was not to indicate in the union catalog the special locations within a departmental library, but rather to put these locations in the departmental catalogs only. Such location indications were the responsibility of the departmental libraries.

In all cases, the Catalog Department was responsible for putting the Reference locations on the union catalog cards. The decisions about which books were to go into the Reference collection were made prior to cataloging. In all libraries, some sort of back-up system existed to catch books for Reference that might have been missed before cataloging. The back-up system was often designed to catch Reference books ordered by bibliographers or non-library faculty. The Head of Reference always approved the orders for the Reference Collection recommended by the Reference librarians. Catalogers were never responsible for making Reference collection decisions. Because Reference decisions were made before cataloging, higher cataloging priority was often given to the reference books.

Transfers into and out of Reference were usually handled by [illegible] when cards needed making or changing. The books being transfe[illegible] usually handled by the Reference department, since the Reference "indicators" used on the books were designed to be changed easily without re-labeling. Serials in Reference required by far the largest number of changes, but, in all but one library, these "de-Reference" changes were handled completely by the Reference Department. Special stamps were used on serial catalog cards to indicate "Latest in Reference." This enabled the Reference Department to send superseded or out-dated volumes directly to the stacks, after removing any special

Reference labels, thus by-passing cataloging completely. No libraries had any statistics on the number of changes made in the Reference collection. One library estimated a few each month and another as many as five each week. In all cases, the changes were reflected as necessary on the catalog cards and the card catalog was kept up-to-date.

The General Reference collection always had its own catalog, either a shelf-list or a full set of cards, and it was usually made by the Catalog Department. In only one case did the Reference Department still make its own brief shelf list card--and that was a procedure used prior to OCLC. The Reference catalog was then used by the Reference staff to indicate special locations within the Reference collection, such as Index Table, Oversize, and Reference Desk. These special locations were not included in the union catalog.

2. Wayne State's library

No Reference locations are listed in the Union catalog in Wayne's library system. Each divisional library indicates its own Reference collection locations according to its own choice in its own catalog. Since the catalog for the General Reference Collection is the union catalog, its locations can only be listed in the separate public shelf list for the General (i.e., humanities and social science) Collection. Reference locations for periodicals (and some other serials) are included in the WSUL Serials List, but not in the catalog.

The general policy for locating materials in Wayne's collections has been based on an "automatic location" system. Books are located within various division libraries on the basis of their classification numbers, e.g., LC classes Q through T locate automatically in the Science Library. These "automatic" locations are not listed on the catalog cards, i.e., SCIENCE does not appear with the call number for a book classed in Q. The patron learns that all Q's are in the Science Library. Locations ARE listed in the union catalog when

1) they represent a permanent collection, e.g., rare books.

2) they are for a collection that spans the whole range of the classification schedule, e.g., the Education Library's collection.

or 3) they represent a non-automatic location in class Z (Bibliography).

The General Reference Collection, though largely a permanent collection and definitely one that spans the whole range of classes A to Z, has not been treated accordingly. When a book needed for the Collection falls outside the "automatic" class numbers for humanities and social science, it can only be housed in the Reference Collection by going through a rather circuitous route. It is sent to its "automatic" division and then permanently checked out to the Reference Collection from the Division. A special location record is then kept in each Division Library to keep track of these permanently loaned volumes.

With the advent of OCLC cataloging at Wayne, it has become easier for Divisions to include in their collections the titles they need that are not classed in automatic numbers. Through the OCLC profile, whenever a title does not class in an automatic number for its Division, the name of the Division can be added to the call number on the union catalog cards. For example, a science book that classes in B will now have the location SCIENCE above the call number. One result is that books for the General Collection that do not class in the specified automatic numbers now get the location stamp GENERAL above the call number. It turns out, however, that most of the non-automatically classed books needed in the General Library are needed for the Reference Collection, so Reference books may get the location stamp GENERAL on their cards.

Another related development is that additional locations can now be listed on union catalog main entry cards at Wayne. This will enable patrons to know at the union catalog where all copies of a title are located in the system. They previously had to consult the special division location files at the automatic location for a listing of added locations.

At Wayne, the Head of Reference approves orders for Reference books that are recommended by Reference librarians. These orders do indicate Reference as their location. There is also a back-up system that catches Reference books ordered by bibliographers. All new books for the General Collection are scanned after cataloging by the General Reference librarians before being sent to the stacks. Any needed for Reference are pulled at this time along with those ordered specifically for the Reference Collection. Reference librarians can not "claim" books for their collection that were ordered for other division libraries. With this system, no decisions for Reference locations are finalized until after cataloging.

Catalogers make no Reference collection decisions. No special cataloging priority can be given to Reference books because they are unidentified prior to cataloging. Some catalogers do attempt to select Reference candidates for higher priority cataloging.

The General Reference collection has its own shelf list catalog made by the Reference Department. The books have Reference location indicators--in this case, colored tape--on the spine for shelving purposes.

C. Procedures used for Indicating Reference Locations

1. The Reference decision

a. Other libraries

Reference librarians order for the general reference collection, indicating the location on the order card. Either the order card itself or some sort of flag with the location transferred to it are inserted in the book before it goes to Cataloging. In one case, the location "ref.?" tells Acquisitions to route the book to Reference after receipt for a final decision before cataloging. The majority of the Reference decisions for the collections were made this way. Various other procedures were used to handle the decision making for gifts, standing orders, and approval books, depending on each library's acquisitions policies. New serial titles were noted "Latest volume in Ref." when ordered. Often there was a specific allocation in the book budget just for Reference materials.

Back-up systems were designed to catch the Reference materials that made it through any loopholes in the process. The Catalogers usually checked with Reference librarians on titles that seemed to have been overlooked. One library indicated "Ref" in the book when the Reference librarian had looked at and rejected it.

One of the main loopholes in several of the systems was created by the bibliographers. Whether or not they were also Reference librarians, the bibliographers were likely to order Reference books without indicating Reference locations or having the Head of Reference look over their selections. In one case, the non-library faculty ordered such books. Reference librarians would usually scan the new book trucks (before or after cataloging) to catch titles ordered by others. At one library, they scanned the slips for the new books being shelved in the stacks, rather than the books themselves. At another library, Reference librarians waited three months before ordering a title because their bibliographers usually ordered everything they needed. They just marked the orders for Reference location after they were filed in the Outstanding Order File. Reference librarians were usually allowed to divert a title from the Main or General Collection to the Reference Collection, but they had to order additional copies of titles they needed that were destined for other departmental libraries. At one library, the Head of Reference estimated that they caught about one book per week from the new book trucks. Other Reference librarians estimated from one book per truck to a few each month. These and other transfer decisions were often the responsibility of one designated Reference librarian.

b. Wayne

The Reference librarians at Wayne order for Reference and put the destination on the order card. Some standing orders are established specifically for Reference, but there are currently no approval plans for General Reference materials. Gift books are examined by Reference librarians after cataloging. Other Reference books are caught while examining the new books after cataloging; these would largely be monographs received on standing order or titles ordered by bibliographers. One Reference librarian is in charge of handling the changes made to the collection.

2. The Reference book

a. Other libraries

Some libraries put REF or R on the spine label. Others use tape or special stickers that can be removed without re-labeling. The Reference location was usually inside the book above or below the call number. Reference books are usually pocketed to facilitate check out to faculty and eventual transfer to the stacks. This was done in Cataloging. Special location tapes were often added by Reference for books to be shelved at the Desk or on Index Tables or in other special locations. Each departmental library did its own "thing" to indicate Reference locations on the spine.

b. Wayne

Wayne uses special tape on the spine and a stamp on the pocket, which are applied by a clerk in the Reference Department.

3. The Reference catalog

a. Other libraries

The Catalog Department usually makes the catalog cards and the Reference Department maintains its own catalog, indicating special locations on their cards with pencil or overlays. At one library, Reference was planning to put their special location overlays on the union catalog main entry card in the near future. "Add slips" go to Reference from Cataloging to notify them to update their cards for added copies and volumes. Reference usually clears its own catalog when transferring a book out of Reference. Each departmental library makes its own reference catalog, if it has one.

b. Wayne

Wayne's Reference Services Department makes and maintains its own Reference catalog, which consists of shelf list cards only. No add slips are created by Cataloging for Reference. Some special locations are indicated, but are not uniformly done. Each departmental library makes its own reference catalog.

4. Reference locations on the catalog cards

a. Other libraries

Reference locations (R, Reference, Ref., etc.) are put on all cards, either above or below the call number. These locations have been or are being profiled as automatic stamps to appear on OCLC produced cards. Added locations are handled manually in all systems. Reference may be an added location either listed below the call number with an "also" stamp and on the shelf list next to the copy number or listed on a separate card filed with the main entry cards. If Reference gets the first copy, the second location gets put in the "Also" position even if it is the General Collection. A couple of libraries had no provision for a book to be in both the Reference and General circulating collections.

Serials are treated like monographs if the complete serial is in Reference. If only recent volumes are kept in Reference, the title is cataloged for the General Collection and a special stamp or overlay is put on all cards or just on the main entry and shelf list cards. The stamp may read Latest in Reference, Latest Volume in Reference, Latest Year in Ref., Latest Ed. in Ref., etc. Open serials are often also stamped for holdings information, e.g., For Holdings see Serials Checklist.

b. Wayne

General Reference locations are pencilled on the General Collection shelf list. No indication is made on the cards in the union catalog. The patron has to be taught to check that shelf list for special locations if the book cannot be found on the shelves. Books with Z class numbers have special location cards in the division shelf list to indicate added locations.

D. Recommendations for Wayne

After having seen so many successful large academic library policies for indicating Reference locations in the card catalog, I definitely recommend that Wayne also adopt the policy. I recommend that Wayne indicate Reference locations in the union catalog only for the General Reference Collection and that other divisions continue to handle their own Reference locations as they choose in their own catalogs. I concur with the libraries that I visited that having more than one Reference location in the union catalog would be too confusing to the patrons. Special locations for books within a division library should be the responsibility of that division. Since the union catalog is also the division catalog for the General Collection, it is appropriate that this special location within it be in the union catalog.

In order to indicate Reference locations, I suggest using REF. above the call numbers on the cards for monographs and complete serials in the Reference Collection. Serials with only the latest volume(s) in Reference should be cataloged for the General Collection and all cards should be stamped LATEST VOL.(S) IN REF. Reference should continue its shelf list catalog, but the Catalog Department should be responsible for making the Reference shelf list card.

The books should not have REF. above the call number on the spine, but rather the spine tape Reference indicator now being used. This would enable Reference to relocate books in the circulating collection without re-labeling.

Since Reference decisions would be made prior to cataloging, higher priority should be given to Reference materials in cataloging. Reference decisions should continue to be indicated on the order cards with a back-up system of scanning the new books after cataloging as usual. Cataloging could also give higher priority to Division reference materials that are so indicated, and it would even be possible for Cataloging to make an extra card for a division library reference shelf list, too, if one were needed. These and other special provisions for division reference catalog cards could be developed via the OCLC profile.

Wayne librarians do want their patrons and staff to know the locations for Reference materials. They are already putting these locations on the General Collection shelf list and they are already working on a special computer-printed listing of their collection. I submit that these methods of indicating Reference locations are less effective for informing patrons and staff than having the locations right in the card catalog. If a library user can find out that a title (or the current volume(s) of a title) is in Reference directly from the catalog, he will not need to learn about and use a second or even third tool to discover that location. I really doubt that many patrons now know that they should check the special shelf list to find out Reference locations. The more help we can feasibly provide at the card catalog, the more we increase its effectiveness as a location tool for the library's users.

The Reference collection already meets the current Wayne criteria for having its locations indicated in the card catalog. It is a relatively permanent collection that spans the LC classification numbers. Then why are Reference locations not in the catalog already? The main objection put forth is that the Reference collection--unlike the rare book collection--is really a dynamic, not a static, collection. Regardless of the fact that a substantial portion of it is probably quite permanent, the feeling is that there would be too much transferring in and out of Reference to keep up card catalog location symbols. This concern is supported by evidence from an attempt made to do so early in Wayne's library history--an attempt that failed. I do not know the details of that earlier system, but I have seen "R's" above Dewey call numbers on old catalog cards. It seems that an elaborate location system was once established at Wayne and later abandoned with little or no record clearing. Yet, we have not let this experience deter us from using all location symbols in the catalog--just Reference. How much changing really occurs in Reference monographs? Reference serials seem to

do the most moving, especially as volumes are superseded by more current editions. But this type of change can be handled quite well by the simple device of the stamp "Latest Vol.(s) in Ref." on the catalog cards. This stamp enables Reference to relocate out-dated volumes in the circulating collection without changing any catalog cards. All they have to do is remove the Reference spine tape and black out the Reference stamp on the book pocket, as they are already doing. The highest number of monograph transfers I learned of was the estimate of five per week.

And what of the work required to up-date the catalog records? Isn't at least part of that work already being done to up-date the General collection shelf list and the computer-produced listing? Now that we have OCLC's on-line cataloging capability, producing a new card set is less work than ever before.

If indicating Reference in the catalog would be more work than is currently being done, the increase would be minimal. Already Reference librarians are ordering for the Reference collection and looking at all the new books. Already Reference is typing and filing cards, marking books, notifying Circulation to up-date the General Collection shelf list, and undoing it all when transfers out of Reference occur. The only group currently not involved is Technical Services. Acquisitions would have to be responsible for passing along the Reference location information to Cataloging and Cataloging would have to learn how to use the appropriate Reference code profiled for OCLC to have the automatic stamp REF. appear above the call number on all the cards. Wayne's OCLC profile already has a code for the Reference collection, which gives us the capability of producing a union card set, a General Collection shelf list card, and an extra shelf list card for Reference books via OCLC.

Changes in workload would result if Cataloging took over the responsibility for applying the special tape and stamping to Reference books, but Reference would still have to tape for any special locations within its collection, like Ref. desk or Index table, that were decided after cataloging. Reference would stop typing its own catalog cards, because their shelf list card would be made by OCLC. Circulation would stop marking Reference locations on the General Collection shelf list, because their shelf list would have the stamp REF. above the call number. And Reference would notify Cataloging rather than Circulation of changes needed on the cards, because Cataloging would be responsible for up-dating the entire card set. Books being transferred would not even need to go through the Catalog Department--they could just have the spine tape removed or added and be sent directly to their new locations, while Cataloging changed or created the necessary catalog cards.

By indicating Reference on the catalog cards, several gains would be made in addition to the obvious one of informing the patrons:

1) Cataloging would give Reference books a higher priority, regardless of the availability of LC or OCLC cataloging.

2) The special automatic oversize feature in the OCLC profile for the General Collection would not apply to Reference books, which have no oversize. Extra work is now being done to avoid the oversize designation for atlases and bibliographies and to remove the designation from the cards for other Reference books.

3) The Reference location would be recorded on our OCLC archival tape, in preparation for a future on-line catalog. Data from the tape can be transferred directly into our SLIC computer program to create any additional Reference listings needed.

4) The Reference location would be treated like any other added location in the catalog, enabling titles to be in both the Reference and division library collections.

5) "Non-automatic" classification numbers in Reference would go directly to the Reference collection and there would be no further need for the permanent loan files in divisions.

Obviously, if my recommendations are accepted, further work will be needed to implement all these changes. Procedures will have to be set up between Reference and Acquisitions for indicating the Reference location on orders. When Reference orders a title that is already on order for a division other than General, Acquisitions should arrange to notify them. Reference may want to institute a "Ref.?" system--at least in the beginning--to re-evaluate its more difficult collection decisions after receipt of the books but prior to cataloging. Perhaps gift books could have Reference decisions made on them prior to cataloging, when they are first evaluated for addition to the library's collections. And the standing orders for the Reference collection will have to be marked for Reference, with indications on the serials regarding current volumes in Reference. This whole decision process should be monitored by keeping statistics on the titles that get through cataloging and are later selected for Reference. I would expect the Reference Department to be concerned if the number were above five books per week after the system was established and running.

A "phase-in" period will have to be established, during which time more changes would be acceptable. It might be a good idea to have the Reference librarians select books from Cataloging's current backlogs, too. These books could then be cataloged with a higher priority.

A "retrospective conversion" of the existing Reference collection of about 10,000 titles would have to be planned and implemented. The simplest way to convert the records in the catalog would be to stamp REF. above the call numbers on the cards. A Reference librarian would have to decide how the serials were to be handled--either all in Reference or Latest Vol.(s) in Ref. This project could be done gradually, e.g., as new volumes are added to the serials, if the manpower is not available immediately or in the near future. Getting this project done should not stand in the way of using the REF. locations on new titles being cataloged.

Judging from the success of the Reference location policies of all the major university libraries that I visited, I am confident that indicating Reference locations for the General Reference collection in the union card catalog is feasible in the WSUL system. The additional workload created for new titles being cataloged would be minimal, especially in comparison to the benefits the system offers. We really can no longer justify denying our patrons and ourselves this location information in the union catalog.